

## **Workforce Innovation in Regional Development (WIRED) Panel**

Webinar: December 7, 2005

Session Transcript

Moderator: Rick Maher

Panelists: Emily Stover DeRocco, Assistant Secretary Employment & Training Administration;  
Thomas Dowd, Deputy Assistant Secretary Employment & Training Administration;  
Lance Grubb, Deputy Administrator Office of Financial & Administrative Management

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Good morning everyone, and welcome to workforce one. I'm Rick Maher and I'm pleased to welcome you to today's discussion, WIRED, Workforce Innovation And Regional Economic Development. We have 500 locations connected virtually with us here today.

I'd like to review some logistics before getting started in earnest with our program. We have a very big group. If you're at your local location, and you were to lose connection, please just stay with us: The software will reboot and bring you back into our room.

Today we'll hear some remarks about WIRED following which we'll have the opportunity to answer some of your questions. Following our opening remarks, we will be providing a method for submitting questions in writing so keep your ideas and your questions handy. You'll have an opportunity to present them to our panelists a little bit later.

We'd also to let people know if this is your first event, we're working with a one-way conference -- with that. Said in terms of logistics, it is my pleasure, in fact, to introduce to you the assistant secretary and chief architect of WIRED, Emily Stover DeRocco.

**Emily Stover DeRocco (Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Thank you so much Rick. I'm delighted by the turnout and the level of interest in this initiative. I hope it's clear that the underlying purpose of WIRED is, indeed, to respond to the challenges, extraordinary challenges, of our 21st century economy. The twin revolutions of technology and information have ushered in the era we all know as globalization.

This era is marked by tremendous advances in communications, travel, and trade allowing individuals instant access to commerce from almost anywhere in the world. This also means that our businesses are competing not only with the company across the street, but also with the company around the globe. While we talk about globalization as a national challenge, we know that the U.S. national economy is, in fact, a collection of many diverse and integrated regional economies, and those regional economies don't necessarily correspond to political boundaries. The impact of globalization across those different regions of the U.S. has been very uneven. Areas that have thrived have done so through regional economic development and the integration of people, institutions, capital, and infrastructure.

If we were to look to successes, we might identify Silicon Valley, the research triangle of North Carolina, the Austin area. Now, some of the characteristics these successful areas have in common are strong universities, which promote Research & Development and incubate new businesses. They also have in common an integrated approach to economic and workforce development. And they host a very strong leadership network.

Now, many areas of our country are still working to meet the challenges of globalization. I would cite for you, for example, the upper Midwest which is still reeling from the decline of the steel and auto industries. And also the challenges of the Carolinas where the triple impact on textiles, furniture and tobacco have caused significant economic dislocations. What these areas have in common is a large talent base that now possesses obsolete skills.

So, the regions that would benefit from the WIRED initiative include regional economies that have dramatically been affected by global trade, areas that have been dependent on a single industry. For example, a military installation that now faces closure from as a result of the BRAC recommendations or an area now recovering from natural disaster.

In designing the WIRED initiative, we have really taken our lead from the council on competitiveness and their groundbreaking report "Innovate America" that was issued in December 2004. It was indeed their inspiration. It helped us think through the design of the WIRED initiative. We are through this initiative helping to create the environment within regional economies where innovation, entrepreneurship and economic growth can flourish. Wired, of course, will focus on the talent development part of building a regional economy, but we recognize that successful regions must also include strategies on infrastructure development and investment. Our goal is to expand employment and advancement opportunities for workers while simultaneously catalyzing the high skill high wage jobs so necessary to economic prosperity.

This competition as you know has been open only to Golden governors and we have asked governors to submit applications. If it does cross-state lines all governors must sign on for the regional economy.

We'd ask you to think about New York, the tri-state New York area or the greater Kansas City area where Missouri and Kansas City surely share a regional economy. Up to 10 regional economies will be selected to receive funding and the technical support that we will be providing over a three-year period.

To provide that technical support, we have signed on as partners to three nationally recognized expert organizations to assist us in this effort. Those organizations are the Council On Competitiveness, New Economy Strategies, and The Council for Adult and Experimental Learning. We also know to create a creative and innovative to implement new strategies within new we'll need to work closely with our federal agencies to provide all available waivers that hinder innovation and creativity in creating workforce and economic development. In the selection process, we will focus on regions that would greatly benefit from innovation and according to the SG&A have provided for us in their application a need, an opportunity assessment, evidence of a strong commitment and breadth of regional leadership network, and finally a strong presentation of the strategic approach they intend to pursue. We will use this initiative to support well-established regional economies.

**Emily Stover DeRocco (Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Once selected, what can a regional economy expect through the initiative? The first will be our support financially and technically in mapping the existing economic landscape so that we together can understand the region's significant strengths and weaknesses, its opportunities and risks.

We will also work as partners to galvanize that strong regional network. We need to build leadership teams in these regional economies that consist of business, academic, entrepreneurial and philanthropic partners. And it will be important to get a consensus to move forward with the strategy developed through this process. Our technical team of experts will be available for the implementation coaching throughout a potential three-year funding cycle.

Since we are committing such substantial resources, we will only be able to pursue eight to 10 regional economic projects. But we feel very strongly about our need to and our ability to share the successes and the learning from this initiative so we will concurrently create with the help of Arizona State University a WIRED academy. And that academy will be used to share successes, to share challenges, to learn from the regional economies that are pursuing these projects and to capture that knowledge for other regions around the country.

I also assure you that we will develop strong performance measures and benchmarks of success to track both short and long-term impact of our work in these regional economies.

**Emily Stover DeRocco (Assistant Secretary, ETA):** As parting thoughts, I want to share with you three points. I believe that this new economy requires new systems and new structures to support it. This is our opportunity to think big and act differently. Secondly, we will use this initiative to break through the static and the red tape that too often cocoons government programs intended in regional economies. And finally we'll look to the value and opportunity to integrate public and private resources into economic development that will serve your region, your state and our nation well.

I look forward to working with you throughout this process. Again, I'm excited about the level of interests, and we commit to you we will be strong partners in this workforce innovation in this

Workforce Innovation and Regional Economic Development initiative as we move forward. Thank you, Rick.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thank you so much, Emily. And I know all of us are very pleased to get this information and very excited about this new initiative as I'm sure a number of those attending around the country probably have some questions that they'd like to submit. Let me ask this at this time -- introduce those folks in the country to a couple panelists seated with us here in the national office.

Many of you know Deputy Secretary Tom Dowd, Employment and Training Administration and the Lance Grubb, Office of Administrative Management. These gentlemen have agreed to join us today and try to support us by answering questions that come to us from around the country.

Now those of you attending today will notice that we've opened up another element of the virtual classroom and there are actually two new areas of your screen that you should be seeing. On the top left of your screen is a window that's called "file share" and the materials that are being used today and other supporting information such as opening frequently-asked questions list are available to you to download. That information will be there throughout our time together here this afternoon.

If you'd wish to download any of the files in that window, hopefully you have one individual seated next to a computer in your room, click on the subject file with your mouse, and the button at the bottom will open allowing to you download the file directly to your computer. So at any time during the balance of our meeting that you'd like to take any of these files to your Desktop, again, just click on it, the button at the bottom of that window will appear allowing to you save the file to your computer.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Now that "file share" window is a white board that allows you to answer your questions in it. Now what I'd like for you to consider doing is the questions that you do have in mind, at the lower part of the window, you would enter those questions into the text box area and click the Arrow next to it. As you answer the question, click the Arrow button and the question will appear on your chat room, and it'll appear for us here in the national office and I see that some of them are coming in already. As they do, those questions will be presented to me, and then I'll ask them of our panel and we'll do our best to get through as many of these questions as we physically can today.

Obviously there are a number of us in the room so please, enter them early and enter them often and we'll do our best to get as many answered today as possible. Any that do not get answered will be answered in writing following today and submitted in the website. The questions as you enter them into the chat room window, enter your questions at the bottom of the window, click the Arrow button to the right, and they'll be submitted electronically here to us and I'll present them to our presenters.

Finally as those questions come in, let me say that remember there will be a archived session available on workforce one for people who want to hear the assistant secretary's remarks a second time or for to you share with your peers also all the question-and-answer session that we're about to go there be archived and available on workforce one and the questions in writing will be available on the Department of Labor ETA website. All those links will be provided to you before we leave here today through the virtual classroom.

Submit your questions to us if you would. Beginning now and I'm going to go ahead with a couple of them that have come in. But before I do, let me introduce again to you Deputy Assistant Secretary Thomas Dowd who's going to make a few opening comments.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Thank you, I appreciate that very much I want to thank the assistant secretary for sharing the broader policy. It's important that they hear directly from the assistant secretary and we appreciate that very much.

Now that we go to the second part of the Webinar, I want to share a couple things with you that I think are important for all of you that are listening and participating. One is that the solicitation for grants announcement was on November 18. That is how the government announces to the public our

interest in letting you know that we have an opportunity to submit applications for a particular grant. That information is done that way to give all potential applicants a fair opportunity to see the same information at the same time and have the same amount of time to complete their application and submit it.

Therefore, today's question-and-answer session will be somewhat confined to answering those technical issues that you may have related to the SGA that you'd like some clarification on. What we're not prepared to do and what we really cannot do is address any specific application or proposal questions you may have pertinent to your specific application. We can answer broadly the technical issues you may have related to the SGA and again this is in fairness to all applicants to make sure they have the same information and are competing on a level playing field. So those questions which you post we will examine them and if they're appropriate for us to address today, we're going to attempt to address as many as we can as Rick has indicated.

Again, Mr. Lance Grubb is the real technical expert with procuring and contract grants and he'll be of great benefit to us. For those that we don't have the opportunity to get to if they're appropriate, we'll have the opportunity to post them as Q & A's on with your website at [www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov). That's enough of a setup to give you the questions we can answer and again we wish you all the best in your submissions in this competition.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thank you. Those are excellent comments and they do great job of framing our dialogue for the balance of the session. For those in attendance today, the website address, the website and other information will be provided on your white board in the presentation here before we close.

So if you didn't get it, we'll be putting them up in your presentation window here shortly.

The questions, gentlemen, have been flowing in, while Tom spoke. And I'd like to go ahead and get the ball rolling so we can get as many of them as we can. Let me start with this. It seems like the logical place to start.

**Question:** Does the state or local workforce investment system have to play a lead role in this initiative?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** This is Lance Grubb. I'll answer that question. The state and local workforce investment system has to be a partner in this initiative. It's not required or necessary that the workforce system at either of those levels be the lead partner in the initiative, however. How you structure that is really up to you.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Wonderful, thank you, Lance. Again, next one.

**Question:** What university is handling the WIRED academy?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Arizona State is the -- has the lead for the WIRED academy.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Arizona State University, great.

**Lance Grubb:** There will be more information on that come out as we go along here.

And the next one.

**Question:** What detail is required in the budget?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** The required submission includes the standard form 424, which has a fact sheet and also has budget documents as part of it. We're interested here in the non-construction budget forms obviously. We're particularly interested in Section A, which is the budget summary of the 424 and that got really shows the total amount of funds requested. We're also interested in Part B of that form which takes the total fund request and breaks it down into various

categories. There are other parts of the budget form which are optional if you care to submit them. But it's really Part A, Section A and Section B which you're required to submit.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thank you, Lance.

**Question:** What is the role of the other federal partners in this initiative?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Tom, do you want to handle that?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Happy to. The other fellow partners are going to be collaborating at the local level. The important point here is that we think it's important for potential applicants to recognize that this is an effort to involve many different players. And so it's important that you partner with your federal partners at the local level including the Department of Commerce. The Commerce and Education and, of course, through us, the Department of Labor.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Wonderful. Thank you. And now, I think -- as long as we're thinking of partnerships, let's go to this one. And the question is:

**Question:** How do you see community colleges fitting into this initiative?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** In developing a talent pool for a regional economy, all levels of education, talent development, should be included. And that would include k through 12 and all post-secondary alternatives including community colleges and four-year universities.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay, good, thank you, Tom.

Here's another one. I'm not sure which of you want to tackle this one.

**Question:** Will there be another opportunity for states to respond under this initiative in the future?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** This is lance Grubb again. The answer to that is no. We're planning to fund these eight to 10 initiatives. We plan to see them through over three years, and that's our focus at this point.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Thank you. Here's another one.

**Question:** Must the definition of the region -- let me start again. Must a definition of the region match the census definition of an MS or some other officially designated definition?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Again, the answer to that question is no. Each proposal should define the regional economy as you see it in your area.

I guess the point is that the economy is regional as being defined by the proposed writer and by the proposal

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Wonderful, thanks so much. Since this is such an important initiative, the question reads

**Question:** Why are we given such a short time to respond?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** So who wants to tackle the hard ones? Tom?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** All right. Well, number one, I think that it's important to recognize that short time is all kind of relative to how prepared you are to respond.

There is a tremendous sense of urgency around this issue and, therefore, those who are prepared to respond are just that, they're well-positioned to do that and prepare to do that. And more importantly, the application, as you review it, has been streamlined.

It only has three parts, and, frankly, we feel that he given the magnitude of the resources that we are prepared and ready to put behind this initiative that -- and again the sense of urgency, that the applicants that are prepared to submit their applications you know our streamline effort will be able to do that within that time frame comfortably.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Good. Thanks, Tom. Here's one.

**Question:** In a multi-state proposal, does each governor who signs on use up one or his/her three proposals?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Yes. The short answer is yes

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** okay. So in a multi-state proposal, each governor assigned uses one of their three proposals.  
Okay.

There's your straight answer on that.

This is another budget question so I'm going to come back to it. The question reads

**Question:** Is it necessary to include an evaluation piece in budget line in the proposal? [Repeated] Is it necessary to include an evaluation piece/budget line in the proposal?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** No, it's not. There will be an independent evaluation of this proposal, but that evaluation will be carried out and paid for by DOL and is not necessary to be included in your budget.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay, wonderful. Back to surprise, surprise another money question.

**Question:** Is the funding level \$5 million Max per year for each of three years or Max \$5 million for three years?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Is the question and let me just read you part B before responding that they estimated. The announcement says there is \$50 million for five projects so is the Max \$5 million for the three years.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** No, the Max is \$5 million per year for each of three years so a three-year project would be a maximum of \$15 million per project.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** So that's a straightforward answer and if people have further questions on that, they can come back to us and submit more that way.

Here's another one. Try to move away from the money side for a minute. The question reads,

**Question:** Must we only use the industry sectors identified in the president's high growth training initiative?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** This is Tom Dowd. No, that is not a requirement and doesn't state so in the SGA as well.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Good. So the answer no, it's not tied in any way, shape or form to any federal model industries, right?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Correct.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Wonderful. Okay. Another question coming in

**Question:** Can you provide a more specific definition of "resource mapping" please?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Again, this is Tom Dowd. We are envisioning a mapping of all factors impacting the strategies. The infrastructure, resources, human capital resources, again, anything that would impact the overall strategies should be included in the envisioning of the mapping that you're going to be using.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thank you, Tom. And I have a few more here I want to encourage people, if there are questions to continue to send them in. We've gotten a lot of them, and we're trying to move through them as quickly as we can and be responsive. Here's another one for you, gentlemen.

**Question:** Is this initiative primarily a hurricane recovery effort?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** This is Tom Dowd. No, it is not and I want to be extremely clear on this. As one of the reasons and I want to share with you that this agency has, in fact, responded very aggressively to the hurricanes during this most recently completed hurricane season which we thought would never end and to the extent that we know of some extensive damage that was caused by Hurricane Katrina and Rita, the employment training administration again responded aggressively with all the resources within our means to try to address those needs as they became aware with us.

But with regards to this SGA and with regards to this competition, the answer is no. This is not about a recovery effort for any particular region or particularly by any of those hit by any of these hurricanes.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** I think the assistant secretary dealt with that in her remarks. It was an area that was disaster certainly has a potential playing here. But it's not directly at that particularly.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Correct.

**Question:** With regard to the designated fiscal agent, does that agency have to be a governmental department or agency?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** And the questioner presents alternatively presents, could it be private sector or non-for-profit.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Could you repeat the question one more time.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** The question reads: With regards to the designated fiscal agent, does that agency have to be a governmental department or agency. Alternatively, could it be a not-for-profit or private sector.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** No it does not have to be a governmental entity. The proposal to governor may designate any entity he chooses to serve as a fiscal agent for the area.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay.

Okay. So that's pretty straightforward answer, Lance, long questions, short answers. I think that's good combination. Here's another one, gentlemen.

**Question:** Does an application require a university partner or can a community college take that role?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Lance, I think I'll take this one just so we're sharing here. There are no required partners other than the workforce system. But it's difficult for us to envision that there would be an application without a university or a full spectrum of education partners. Again, I think assistant secretary kind of under scored that in her remarks earlier.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Wonderful, thanks for that clarification, Tom.

And this is a question about a multi-state proposal, and obviously we'll probably see some of those.

**Question:** In a multi-state proposal, should one state be designated as the grant recipient?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** And Lance, you're looking at me like you're going to take that one.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** I guess I'll answer that.

Again, to that is yes. One, the partners in the proposal should designate one state and one fiscal agent as the lead for the initiative.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** So it's one grant recipient and it doesn't have to be a non-for-profit or governmental entity.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** The grant recipient has to be a governmental entity and that would be the governor but the fiscal agent does not have to be a governmental entity it could be a not for profit or private company.

SECTION BREAK

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Got it.

This is a great question in a world that is kind of driven by performance measures, I think that we've got some people thinking in those terms as they present this question. And this one reads

**Question:** Does the Department of Labor intend for proposals to include specific accomplishments such as you the number of trained people or some other unit of measurement? Or are the strategies intended output?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** So, in other words, does the department labor intend for the proposal to include specific accomplishments in terms of outputs to be measured from the proposal number of train people or some of other units of measurement. Actual impact in terms of retention, employment and earnings.

**Tom Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** some of the measures of success will be actual impact such as employment, retention and impact

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Yeah, you'd like to see impact for what the proposals are attempting to achieve.

**Tom Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Absolutely, with all of our programs.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Here's an interesting question, not that they haven't all been interesting but this one jumps out at me a tad.

**Rick Maher (Moderator): Question:** Is this more about transforming the economy or about transforming the systems?

**Tom Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Well, I'm not sure that question fits neatly-- you know the SGA in terms of the technical guidance we would give you other than giving you our opinion. I think we need to be a little careful with that question. Lance?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Yeah, I would say that it needs to be both. It would be hard to transform the economy without transforming the system just like it would be hard to transform the system without hopefully transforming the economy.

SECTION BREAK



**Rick Maher (Moderator):** well, yeah, and I think it's -- it is certainly the message we heard before is one that challenges people to transform some things I would imagine.

Okay, Here we've got another one here. And this question reads

**Question:** Are we required to use all the performance outcomes listed in the SGA or can we select from that list particular performance measures that may apply to our proposed project?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** And let me give you a minute to refer to the SGA and performance measures that I guess these individuals are alluding to.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** I'm almost certain -- this is Tom Dowd again, that we're going to be looking for all of them, but we're going to give you a quick look at our SGA, to make sure that we're not giving you any information, but I'm pretty sure we're going to be looking at them.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** If we can come back to direct answer but if you don't want to spontaneous off the top of your head. I'm going to park this that here to make sure it gets dealt with. The question is:

**Question:** Are we required to use all the performance outcomes listed in the SGA or can we select from that list particular specific performance measures that may refer to our proposed project?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** We're to go study that and come back to it live today or in writing following today and I'll put that in our pending pile right here as I direct you guys to the next question that was just placed here for me to present to you. This one says

**Question:** Defining the need for the project is cited as an important component of the proposal. Defining a need is cited as an important component. Beyond currently available economic and labor market data provided by state agencies, would more detailed research that attempts to identify and target project activities, and that is part of the project, be a desirable element of an application?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** And it's a long one.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** It's a long one, Rick.

Let me answer it this way. It doesn't preclude research, but we do not want a year research before we're prepared to develop strategies. So I mean, again, it's a long question, it's a little bit complicated but I think that addresses that issue.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay.

While we're waiting for the next question --

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Sure.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** If you don't mind, one of the things I failed to mention at the outset and I meant to but, let me do it now -- the grant officer sitting here next to me, one of the things that we want to bring to your attention before anyone leaves this call is the importance of reviewing the SGA with regarding to the submission dates and times of your application.

There was an earlier question this afternoon with regards to some concern about the short period of time to respond, and we've addressed that. But I want to make sure that your application gets here on time and that we properly receive it so it can be given all due consideration. We would not want anyone to not have their application get here in time to be considered or be not given the due consideration. So we do want to stress the importance to review the submission dates and times outlined in the SGA.

Lance, any comments on that?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Yeah, just to follow up on that a little bit, we do regard this as a very important initiative, and very shortly after this SGA closes on January 5th, we will begin to review the proposals and get on with the process of selecting the eight to 10 areas that we're going to fund. We want to do that fairly quickly because we think it's important to get these projects underway.

So it's very important that your proposals be in on time. If you look at the SGA, we provided multiple suggestions as to where you can submit a proposal. I would encourage you to use the grants.gov. You'll get a receipt that your proposal has been accepted. If you do that, prepare that if you've never done this before it does take some time to register and you need to start that process a little early.

If you want to submit your proposal by regular mail, when you -- the drop-dead date for doing that would be December 31st. We said five days before the close of the SGA, and if you want to do that by regular mail, you'd have to do that by December 31st.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thank you, Lance, that's important information and this question kind of follows logically on the end your comments but let's get it in the record.

**Question:** When will a final award announcement be made?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** You talked about when they need to be here.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Our target date for selection and announcement is the end of January or early February.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Wonderful. And when announcements are made the next step would be funding. So let me read this question.

**Question:** Are the funds given to the governor and subcontracted to other parties? That's the question.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well, the governor will be the grantee so the funds are granted to the governor, the governor will then pass the funds through the designated fiscal agent to the parties at the local level.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** It could be the university, it could be any entities the governor wishes to use to operate the grant.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thank you, gentlemen. Another one

**Question:** What specific expertise do the technical assistance providers bring to the table?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Okay, lance, I guess I'll take that one. Number one, they bring their considerable experience with regards to assessment and as Emily has indicated in her remarks these are the leading experts in this field, and we're pleased to be able to work with them.

They bring with them their knowledge of best practices and that includes on the ground experience with innovation in regional economies and again, these folks are the real leading experts here in our nation today. They also bring their ability to facilitate, the facilitation expertise so we're very pleased that they've been willing to join us in this exciting opportunity by way again of their assessment skills and knowledge and facilitation capabilities and their knowledge of best practices based upon their experience on the ground in dealing with regional economies.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Wonderful, thanks, Tom. Another question yet again: Will the Department of Labor help us get waivers from other federal agencies, in particular, from the Department of Education?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** The answer specifically and particularly is, yes.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Good.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** And I do want to clarify an answer I gave at outset of our -- of the Q&A session and that is the role of the other federal partners, and I want to clarify. The departments of commerce and education are our partners. That is, they're the partners of the Department of Labor at the federal level and therefore, other agencies will be engaged as needed, but we'll work closely with them with regards to issues of waivers or any other kinds of requirements that might help to streamline this effort to make it more efficient and more effective because we all want to be working together and pulling this wagon in the same direction, and we're going to help do everything we can with our federal partners here at the federal level.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thanks, I think it's an actually insightful question and important answer. Thank you, Tom.

There are a number -- we were flooded here with a bunch of questions, and as you guys might imagine, a number of them are very similar or the same. And I just -- I've got a couple hear that I'm going to back up but if I can preface this concept for you.

A lot of questions coming in on the concept of regional. Many of us who have been around the system for a long time think in terms of local economies and national economies and now we're introducing this concept of regional economies and some people are struggling just a tad with that. If I want to expand a little and try to provide whatever clarity you can here.

There's been a few questions on this issue so I want to underscore it for you. The question reads

**Question:** What does the term regional mean? Is it multi-county regional, multi-state regional?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** And that's where they end but we can go on from there, I'm sure.

So, Tom, do you want to address that.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Yes, let me as a result by saying that none of the applicants should be confined by any established definitions they may already be familiar with regards to region or regional.

It is not a particular or it is not particular jurisdiction or political jurisdiction. It's not a workforce investment area. Yes, it can be multi-county. And in some cases it can be multi-state. These regional economic areas are natural out growths of where the economy is expanding and growing, not dictated by political jurisdiction or political boundaries or maps.

Or just simple boundaries that say this is a county and the state. That's just not how economies grow. The applicants need to be able to define for us what are those regional economies that they're developing.

We assume they know about best. But they're not confined to jurisdictional boundaries as we know them for political purposes or boundaries for geography.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** I hope that is helpful. It certainly is to me.

You think that was a good explanation and again, we're still in the same general premise with this next question.

**Question:** If a proposal includes activities that cross state lines, with local partners, is it necessary to have the endorsement of the second state?

Do you want immediate to read that one more time because it gets a tad confusing.

**Question:** If a proposal includes activities that cross state lines, with local partners, is it necessary to have the endorsement of the second state?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA)** The answer is yes, if the activities does cross state lines, then it does have to be endorsed by both states.

It may be seen that both, both states have to be endorsed as partners as well.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Just while we're waiting for other questions to arrive

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** I do also wants to indicate and remind folks in case we don't get to your question or there's other questions that are similar on [www.DOL.gov](http://www.DOL.gov), we're posting questions and answers that people can get after we're done here today. And it's important for people to realize that there's another source to follow up if we don't get to your question today.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** For those of you in attendance around the country, your screens apparently are showing you contact information, again before we leave here today, we'll give you links, the ones that Tom just shared and links to the archive of this web event so there'll be multiple opportunities to find of both connecting with the content of today but also with responses that happen after today.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Let me clarify the link. [www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov) I really do work here, but sometimes I get them mixed up, but that's the link.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay, thanks, Tom. Here's a simple straightforward question.

**Question:** Can a state receive more than one award?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Certainly, the state can split up to three applications. There's nothing that would preclude submissions of three applications from being funded.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Again, straight question. Straight answer, thanks, Lance.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Good.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** A good question.

**Question:** Will you clarify or comment on I guess the need for matching funds?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Sure. Lance, I'll be happy to take this one.

No match is required, but we do look to leveraging private and public resources, and we'll -- that will be a very helpful to see that in your proposals. But, again, no match is required.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Not required. But it's one of the things you're looking to see.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Certainly.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Okay.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Always important.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Another one. And this question reads

**Question:** Can we submit an application that includes rural states that all have a common industry cluster - need and opportunity?

And can we submit an application that includes rural states that all have a common industry cluster, need and opportunity?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** We're eager to include rural economies and you recall innovations in this initiative.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** So the answer's yes.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Certainly.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Good. Back to the numbers for a minute. And this question reads

**Question:** Can the administrative costs be shared among the partners?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Interesting thought.

I'll have to defer to --

I think that is a Lance question. Can the administrative costs be shared among the partners?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** I'm semi stumped by this. There will be some project management costs obviously associated with this grant. Those costs can be charged to the grant.

If there are other costs that the partners will share among themselves, certainly they can do that. But the basic management cost of the grant will be part of the grant cost.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. So again, the answer there is you have -- if you have project management costs, they're part of your grant proposal. If that's not what the questioner intended or we missed boat, Lance, I'll say open go ahead and submit a clarification, and we'll try to deal with it.

**Question:** What is your definition of workforce system?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** If that was a Lance question, this is a Tom question.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Just to be clear with everyone, we're talking about the public workforce investment system. And this is funds under the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner Peyser, that comprises the funding what we otherwise know as the public workforce investment system.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. You know, that actually is a good question.

A lot of people talk about it and now we've had a chance to talk about it in this small little group that we've assembled here today.

We're getting a few questions on this issue of under, is this initiative really targeted at regions that have been affected by tragedies and natural disasters.

I think they may underline this question so let me ask this one again. This one says

**Question:** will reward be submitted randomly across the nation, or are they really targeted to certain regions?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** The awards, Lance and I are just sort of tickling each other here, the awards will obviously be awarded to the best applications. This is a competitive process, and that is the answer.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. So the answer the best proposals from wherever they come, all right.

And again, the next question:

**Question:** It is our understanding that only the governor's office can take the lead in submitting an application. Is that correct? Only the governor's office can take the lead in submitting an application?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Only the governor can submit an application so regardless of who might take the lead in preparing the application, it must be submitted by the governor and the governor will be the grantee.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Wonderful, thank you.

It's a good question.

**Question:** How does WIRED relate to the regional hotspots concept discussed by the council On Competitiveness, what might be some of its similarities and maybe any differences?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay.

We'll start with you, Tom.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Looking at Lance here, it looks like he wants me to take this.

As was outlined by the assistant secretary during her presentation, we've really taken our lead from the Council on Competitiveness with regard to their vision on the hotspots.

And the hotspots include the economic development strategy, coupled with the workforce development strategy coupled with the investment and entrepreneurship strategy and that creates what they call the innovation hotspot strategy and that lead and that definition is what the hotspots is all about and that's what's helped give us what we're hoping for in terms of creating the environment within the regional economies through the use of entrepreneurship and through innovation to create this new WIRED initiative.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** So regional hotspots kind of became part of the impetus behind this initiative.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Yes.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** It looks like a two-parter so we'll start with part one and go from there. First...

**Question:** Would areas with larger populations be more likely to receive funding than rural regions?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** I'll continue on that. That's main question but let me give you the context here—It says global competition significantly impacts manufacturing and change in any area can be shared through the WIRED academy, right?

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**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** If we can go back to the first question, with regards to would there be more likely chance to receive funding? The answer is no. Again it's an open competition. The best application gets funded. And with regards to any change in an area that can be shared through the WIRED academy, yes.

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**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay, good. We have got a question here that sounds -- it looks a little bit like a Lance question to me, call me crazy but in a minute you'll know why.

I think there's a little bit of confusion in the mind of the questioner we've been using so maybe this gives us an opportunity to clear them up.  
And the question reads

**Question:** Please clarify applicant versus recipient versus fiscal agent and it continues, which of these is the governor? Which is the regional partnership?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well, the governor is the applicant on behalf of a region. So the governor must submit the application or governors in the case of a multi-state proposal. They are the applicant.

The governor then designates a grant recipient which will get the money on a day to-day basis and be the point of contact on a day to-day basis. That could be a public entity. It could be a private entity, whoever the governor designates. The governor may also designate a fiscal agent which is the entity responsible for administering the money on a day-to-day basis. That may be the grant recipient or it may be a different agency all together. It's the grant recipient and the fiscal agent designated by the governor who are responsible for managing the grant on a day to-day basis. So the simple answer here is you're telling them the applicant is the governor and the other two, they need to tell you who they were. The governor will tell us who the recipient and fiscal agent is.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** And again if the question had except other than what we've read into this question, we do have context, Lance for your office to get into the weeds with some of these questions.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Right.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** And feel free, folks that are attending, virtually to target those kinds of questions to Lance and his staff who are available to help you.

Another question here: And it's a money question:

**Question:** Are these funds available as a lump sum, or will they be on a reimbursement basis? Lump sum or on a reimbursement basis?

I think Lance is going to take that one for us.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well, the way these grants are worked like many other grants, we will establish for you an account in the HHS payment management system and as you incur costs, you may draw down from that account.

Because we're contemplating a multi-year effort here, we're going to put the funds in one year at a time, so, no, there would not be \$15 million available at the beginning. We would fund the grant \$5 million in the first year, and you would draw that down, and we would add additional money in the second and third year.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** And Tom?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Let me add to this also because it sounds like the questioner may not be very familiar with how the government actually funds the grant.

And that is as Lance has indicated; these funds get put into what's called a payment management system. And you draw down against them as needed. And there are limitations on the amount of money you can draw down at any one time based upon that need. And obviously the government doesn't put \$5 million into the account and have you take \$5 million out tomorrow and put it in a bank and earn interest on it.

Its designed so that the money's available on a yearly basis and you draw down based upon need and all the technical as petting will be spelled out in the awardees grant document, but that's the payment management system. That's how that works.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thanks for that clarification.

Here's a public-private funds issue.

**Question:** In combining private and public funds to support the project, how is this to occur?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** I guess the easy answer to that is we would expect the applicant to tell us that as we said, before. There is no matching requirement here, but we are looking to leverage resources as much as possible in this effort, so if there are nongrant funds that are going to be used for that purpose, we would expect the applicant to tell us what they are and how they intend to do that.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Thanks.

**Question:** Would private associations or employers be allowed to partner with community colleges or universities for the WIRED initiative grant?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Again, private association or employers as partners to communicate colleges or universities, would that be permitted?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** I'll take that one, Lance.

Yes, and again what we want to galvanize these regional networks and build a leadership team consisting of civic, business, investor, academic, entrepreneur, and philanthropic members so it's important that we build this leadership team consisting of all these component memberships that will help drive this entire WIRED initiative forward.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thanks, Tom.

I think this is a good question. It may prompt a tad of a discussion.

**Question:** Could you guys please elaborate on the statement that the initiative should not support well established economies?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** That sounds like a Tom question.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Yes. As we stated at the outset and as Assistant Secretary DeRocco presented in her presentation, clearly this initiative is designed to address the urgency underlying the need for promoting and supporting the growth of productive regional economies.

Again, the idea here is to help to support and enhance that growth. If they're already mature and established, well then they don't need our support. So this is designed to help those that are beginning to grow and develop and need to continue to foster and move forward.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Thanks, Tom. I think that was an important statement to be made and in response to the question.

Another one that may prompt a bit of a discussion -- I don't know -- the question reads

**Question:** For those who do not receive the award, will there be an opportunity to get feedback?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** For those who are not successful grantees, will there be an opportunity get feedback?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** I'll hand Lance that one.

We normally have a process for how we handle that.



**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** I think, yes, on a number of levels. I mean, if you mean biofeedback, feedback on your proposal, yes, we will have a mechanism for that. I think as assistant secretary statements, we're also establishing these academies that will be used to disseminate best practices and other things that we learn from this initiative that can be shared with and used by people who are not -- maybe even didn't apply for funding under this. We will publish best practices, and we will disseminate the information as widely as we possibly can.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Let me add to that also, all tools produced will be made available to all regional economies. We'll publish best practices and focus at the Workforce Innovations

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** And that is the WIRED academy aspect we've been hearing about during this meeting.

I'm not sure which the questioner anticipated but we covered all bases and that was important.

Another question

**Question:** Do you need a letter of support from all resource partners participating in the project, or can some of the partners come on at a later time?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** In other words, do I have to know who's working with me at the time I give you my application for the grant?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Obviously some partners could come on at a later time, and no, we're not looking to get 50 or 75 pages worth of support. We want a concise statement of how you propose to do and who's going to be involved in it.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** I just want to add to my colleague's answer and that is an important point. The SGA does limit the number of pages, I think its 20 pages, so we're not going to be reviewing these applications and evaluate them based upon the pound. So simply stuffing a lot of support letters is not going to add a great deal of value. It's really again as Lance has stated as partners are needed and are an integral part of the partnership, you make that known. But we've had applications in the past that just came in with voluminous amounts of material that were not targeted, they were not integrated or were not really pertinent to the application itself and, therefore, that's why it's limited to 20 pages. You need to be concise and succinct and really address the criteria so we can make an effective evaluation of the proposal.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** The letters are not what you're looking for. Partnerships, maybe but you don't need necessarily letters. Good.

This on the area of partnership, let me take it to this next question:

**Question:** What are your expectations regarding the state leadership role in the implementation of grants at the regional level?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** So this is like post award at the implementation phase.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Well, let me just state, and maybe be rather direct about this. Either lead or get out of the way. Either is fine with us. But it's got to be one or the other. We want to be that specific about it. If we want these initiatives to be successful, provide the leadership or let someone else do that.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. So leadership needs to be provided for by the governor is the answer to the question, right?

Or get out of the way.

Or get out of the way, right. I got that part of Tom's answer.

Here's one, let me stay on the partnership theme for a moment. This question says:

**Question:** Are project includes federal agencies other than commerce and education. Can DOL help us in dealings with these agencies?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** I think there's been a question as allowing to waivers, Tom, that bordered on this but maybe they intended to go deeper than that. Do you want to tackle this?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Yes, I want to clarify if there are other federal agencies that would be appropriate to be engaged and involved in a successful effort beyond education and commerce, certainly we want to do what we can here at the federal level to facilitate a smooth involvement and support for a successful project.

Okay. Good. Thank you.

**Question:** Will facilitators from DOL consulting partners, and again we heard the assistant secretary pick to this cadre of assistant partners available. Will facilitators from those partners be available as we need them so we can eliminate strategic planning and facilitators from our budget? I guess should we rely on you for that kind of support or build that into our proposal

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** The answer is yes. It's our intention to have these contractors working with us who are the real leaders, and they will be available, yes.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Thanks, Tom.

Here's another, again a little bit of a long one.

**Question:** Will ETA post and make available to all bidders, the results and evaluation studies of path demo projects which were similar to this new initiative. As an example, the regional skill partnerships, skill shortages, sector projects, community audits or high growth training initiatives?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Well, Lance, I guess I'll take this one also. Yes, but none of these have been listed in the question are nearly as expansive or comprehensive as the WIRED initiative. But the answer's yes.

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**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay, thanks.

This is a good question I think. The question that we're getting in is:

**Question:** How can employers become partners with the governor's proposal. Who would they connect with? I mean, the governors aides on the call, so you just need to make sure I guess that their states businesses know about this and how to connect with this.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** I guess, these agencies need to make sure that your state's businesses know about this and know how to connect with it I guess is what these question is alluding. They're probably private sector folks at this call but this is going to happen at the governor's level is bottom level.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Yes.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** But you got to get to the governor to be a part of it. A range of part nip structure can be envisioned.

**Question:** Are there particular expectations or practices regarding coordination of partnerships for this initiative?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** In other words, this party's thinking that there's a lot of different ways to set this up. Are there any kind of preferred methods or expectations that you guys have?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Let me say that this is one of those questions that would require us to give you more than an interpretation of the SGA rather than the clarification on a technical matter so the answer from us can be there are no particular practices that we are looking to and we ask you to be creative and innovative. We are not in a position from a technical perspective to give you guidance beyond that.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Good.

That is very interesting question and I'm just going to throw out there, I'm dying to hear the answer myself.

**Question:** Do regions need to be geographically contiguous? And then they continue, two BRAC communities that are facing similar challenges be considered a, quote, region?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** I guess the implication the BRAC communities could be removed geographically from one another but have economic realities and maybe even bases that are similar, I don't know.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Do regions need to be geographically contiguous. Regional economies by definition are geographically contiguous, number one. And then you asked about the possibility of two BRAC communities. And essentially what you're saying that our sharing similar circumstances, but are not, in fact, considered a region, no. They're not a region.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** So the answer yes, they need to be geographically contiguous.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Yes.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Wonderful.

There's a question here I think that Tom, we'll come back to you on because you answered first question.

**Question:** Can you speak more to the evaluation component that will be run by the Department of Labor? Is there an evaluation plan already developed? If so what will expected participation look like?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Let me share with you for now we're still developing the evaluation plans so I can't share with you beyond that. But I would share with you that what we do have in mind will not be burdensome but will engage folks, and that's important. We want to get obviously your input.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. But, again, to kind of tie that together to your earlier answer, Tom, performance and the whole evaluation is a federal activity and will be provided for separately and not a part of these project grant proposals.

Another question here:

**Question:** Can an applicant identify other federal grant dollars as leverage?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Certainly, I think if you go back to one of the first questions that was asked about the budget information that had to be submitted, we said that you needed to submit both a budget summary and the budget broken down by various cost categories and that the rest of the budget sheet was optional. Part C of that budget sheet is non federal resources which would provide you an opportunity or a place to identify other resources that are being brought to the table. If you want to do it there, please feel free to do so.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Good question and good answer.

**Question:** What is meant by innovation in the context of this proposal? Are you looking for innovative new industries or innovative approaches even if they are within an existing high growth industry in your region?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well, let me just share. Either is innovative, number one. But innovative approaches are being sought. That's what we're seeking in general.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Right.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** But with regards to the question, we would say either is innovative.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. So either of that works.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Yeah.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** New ideas, new approaches.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Right.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Breaking down barriers, right.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Right.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. This may require a little bit of clarity because it's been dealt with a couple times and maybe at least for one questioner isn't quite getting it doesn't yet so let's see if we can add some depth to the discussion. The question reads.

**Question:** What the roles are -- let me start again because I got tripped up on my own tongue there. What roles are ones you expect employers to play? What roles do you expect employers to play?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Well, our expectation with regards to this SGA and your application is that you would represent them as they are key to developing economic strategy and creating jobs. Absolute key points in your application.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay.

Good. This next question, back to money, so Lance, I think we're coming your way, get ready.

**Question:** When will funds be available to states once the announcement is made in January or February, or by a fiscal year? That's a question mark. If a fiscal year, which one?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** The funds, when the grant announcements are made, we will finalize the grant negotiations, execute the grants and the funds will be available at that time.

When we announce it, the funds will be available.

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** We'll work aggressively because of the urgency of this issue and wanting to support it to get these funds out quickly to the successful awardees.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Awards immediately followed by funding --

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Yes.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay, great, thank you. Here is a question. This sounds like a personal one. Question reads:

**Question:** We own a small rural business. Will you consider proposals with regional partnerships that -- that include small businesses on an equal foot wing proposals with partnerships that include large corporate entities?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** The answer is yes, and the answer is again, I want to make sure that everyone has a copy of the SGA. They can look at the three criteria in the area that we're going to use to assess each and every proposal and answer simply is yes.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** There have been a couple of things that have alluded to this issue of rural economies and in this case the small rural business, and it seems like there's a few people that don't understand that rural is important to you.

While what I'm hearing you say the solution to rural regional areas is important and you've been repeating that through the so it's getting done.

Good. Another question:

**Question:** When will funds be available to states?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** I think we dealt with that one. Let me skip that.

**Question:** Are proposals expected to address a regional economy as a whole, or can they limit their focus to particularly important sectors?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** I think it's pretty clear in the SGA, but, again, I'll make it clear. It is -- our expectation is the regional economy as a whole.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Thanks. We've been receiving I think a lot of questions about working across international orders.

And I think I just want to make the point that we've got folks right now working on this, and we're probably going to have to take those kinds of questions including I think questions as it relates to tribal areas, right? And we're going to have them research those answers and respond following today's session on the websites that we'll provide to the audience. And we've moved to include that website now. So let me call the attention to the folks that are in the room to this – [www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov).

On that website will be written responses to questions that we don't tackle today and particularly this kind of a group of questions that deal with issues that kind of cross international borders and rather than wing that we want to make sure we have the right people responding to that in quite precise and comprehensive ways.

We have had a number of questions that alluded to high skill or high wage kinds of issues throughout today so this is another one and let me kind of throw this out there and see if we can get you guys to think in terms of a response to this. The question reads:

**Question:** Will the Department look for favorably upon high skill, high wage job creation to pull the region's economy up or on lower skill, lower wage job creation to help distressed populations?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well, I think in general, this department always looks favorably upon high skill-high wage job creation throughout the entire country. But the fact of the matter is the goal is to expand employment and advancement opportunities for workers while simultaneously catalyzing the high-high skill jobs and that's an underpinning of the entire WIRED initiative.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay good. In the demonstrating of strategic partnerships, who do you consider to be investors? In the demonstration of strategic partnerships, who do you consider to be investors?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Lance, I guess I'll take this one as well. We consider both the public and the private. Often states are providing seed dollars. The more often private venture capitalists and financial institutions are among the investor populations in the strategic partnerships that we find.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Good. This is a little bit starting to get into some detail level and some would say into the weeds but I understand what the questioner is going with this. And the question is.

**Question:** For budgeting purposes will there be required quarterly meetings that take place? And, for instance, in D.C. or at the regional or state level, can you guys address that question?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well, our expectation with regards to where is that we'll be at the existing hotspots of innovation.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. So the answer is whatever's required to run their project and wherever that makes sense regionally.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Right.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** But you don't have a mandate that they come to Washington once a month I guess is what was implied by that question.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** That's correct.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** okay, great.

**Question:** After reviewing the SGA we do not see a list of activity restrictions. What can funds be used for?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** That sure sounds like a Lance question to me.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well, there's kind of a long-winded answer to this. Our funds can be used for lots of different things. Funds could obviously be used to provide job training to people. The funds could be used to develop curricula, build competencies to train people in the workforce. They can be used for strategic planning. They can be used for identifying and disseminating information, and they can be used for lots of activities that are aimed at increasing integration of the education system, the workforce system, and the private sector in the regional economy. So there are lots of different things that these funds can be used for.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Good. We mentioned demand driven and high growth a couple different times today. This is another one that touches on that.

**Question:** Would greater weight be given to proposals that focus on emerging industries like, for instance, IT, information technology, or biotech or revitalizing/retraining jobs in more traditional sectors such as durable manufacturing?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Tom, do you want to tack that will?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Yes, the answer is equal weight, number one, and, frankly, whatever is the future of the regional economy. And I want to just respond a little further if I could on some of these questions have alluded to questions like would we give greater weight, more consideration given to regional or rural?

The SGA are spelling out what you have to address and criteria, so we're not hiding anything from you in saying we've got these ideas, but we're not telling it to you. We spell it out so it's an equal playing field for everyone, it's based on the application and their ability to articulate and succinctly develop their proposal. There is no weight or any kind of favoritism or any kind of anything other than how it's spelled out in the SGA.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Thanks, Tom. I see that we're running to within a half an hour of the time that we allotted for today. And questions are still coming in albeit at a slower pace so we may be getting to a point that we're responding to those things that people need.

Your questions have been right on the mark and we appreciate you being so generous with your time here. Here's the next question:

**Question:** Can we use current Federal WIA/WIB funds for the financial support to this application?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** which is the way it's written in the question. Can that money be used in support of this application?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Let me answer that in kind of a round about way. First of all, the activities that are proposed to be part of this application are to be funded with the funds that would be provided as part of the grant. If as part of your regional strategies there are activities WIA-allowable activities that would be part of that strategy, those activities can certainly be paid for by your WIA grant. But the WIA funds are not part of this application or part of this grant.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Thanks. I think that that -- that is a complex question. I think it's pretty straightforward answer. And again, if the questioner had a different angle on it, feel free to come back to us, and we'll try to get you more clarity but I appreciate that answer.

**Question:** Please understand what is mentioned in the SGA under flexibility with regard to waiver authority and work FLEX authority?

**Thomas Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** Okay. This is Tom. This is authority that exists undercurrent law and it is mentioned in the SGA to ensure had a applicants take advantage of all existing flexibility in operating the projects that will be funded under the SGA. These will be explained in greater detail on our website to help folks who are not familiar with the work flex authority and other waiver authorities.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Thanks, Tom, and again I want to call your attention to those folks that are attending virtually that the slides are kind of cycling through, and you see questions for assistant secretary's office. Contact information as to your questions in the grants office as well as potentially connecting to materials that will be provided on [www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov) following today, so I want people to give the answer that the slides are cycling and you can take down these various contact points so you can continue to submit any potential questions or gain additional clarity following our time here today. We are running -- beginning to run short on it, but let's try to tackle a couple more questions here, at least if we can.

The next one

**Question:...**Regional economies can be very uneven. With one sector well developed and other sectors underdeveloped or threatened or marked by uneven participation-- given that, how would you relate this phenomenon with how you are referring to as "established or mature economies?"

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** That's a long question.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Yes, but let me take a stab at it here. Again, looking at regional economies holistically, and focusing on the transformational strategies impacting an entire region, it's not individual sectors. I hope that helps clarify. We're not talking about individual sectors here.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Good. This is a -- -apparently somebody's taking me up on my offer because we have a clarifying question on the WIA funding issue.

**Question:** The clarification, can WIB funding be used as part of the regional match?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Lance.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** I think as we said, at the very beginning, there is no required match in this grant so there's no need to use this funding or any other funding as match.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Let me anticipate another follow-up -- but can it be?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well.

I don't know it would be.

It can't be used as match because there is no match. But certainly we're talking about leveraging resources or leveraging other programs, bringing them into this effort and certainly, we would want to leverage the workforce system in this -- in any successful project here.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Good. I think you've covered all the bases now, thank you, Lance, for tackling that for us. Okay, another question here

**Question:** Are individual states being given guidance on how to select three applicants?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** I can give you a smart answer but the answer is no, every state does that on their own. They don't get any guidance from us.

**Question:** Can these dollars be utilized to support entrepreneurs directly such as investments in high-tech, high-growth businesses that are growing?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** It's an interesting angle and let me sure we have got it. Can these dollars be utilized to support entrepreneurs directly such as in investments in high-tech-high-growth businesses that are growing?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** And the answer is question if, and the ifs, number one, if it's clearly related to the regional strategy that you articulated and two, if it's tied to the kinds of allowable uses of the money which we talked about a little earlier. So with those two caveats, yes, you certainly can use it that way.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Thanks. Another question, back to applications and timing, Lance,

**Question:** Why must applications that are going to be mailed be mailed by December 31st? Can an application be sent overnight?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well, yes, of course, it can. We offered in the SGA three basic options to submit an application. One was to submit it electronically through grants.gov, the apply feature of grants.gov, actually, we offered four options. A second would be to have it submitted or delivered by an overnight carrier such as postal express, overnight mail is basically what that is. A third if you happen to be in the D.C. area would be to hand deliver the application and a fourth was to submit the application by regular mail. It's only in the case of the regular mail submission that we said it had to be postmarked five days before the due date, which by regular mail means December 31st. Tom, do you want to chime in on that.

**Tom Dowd (Deputy Assistant Secretary, ETA):** What I want to say what we're trying to do and Tom articulated the four possible ways of submitting your application timely and making it sure it gets here by the due date all we're trying to stress we don't want you to be late. We've put a lot of work and effort, it's always a shame when something ends up getting here late and has to be disqualified because we didn't receive it in time.

Again, back to the SGA. This is the public explanation of the submission dates and times to give everybody a level playing field so we try to cover all the possibilities so that, however, you plan to transmit it to us, we do get it on time because we would not have to disqualify you on a technical note



because you were not here on time. But we have to follow these established requirements because it is a competition.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Good. And thanks for that clarity. So December 31st, the answer to the question is really with the traditional regular mail is where it applies.

I've got two questions here that are so tied together I'm going to bundle them if I might. This question reads:

**Question:** Do we need to receive the governor's approval now before proceeding further with writing a proposal? Then I'll ask the follow-up. Let me tack that will one first.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Well, the governor has submit the application so, no, you don't have to have it now, but I would think if you were going to go through the process of putting one together that you would want to make pretty sure that the governor was onboard and willing to submit it.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** This next piece ties to that.

**Question:** Does the governor's signature need to be obtained prior to submission?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** The governor would have to sign the SF424 so, yes, the something would have to appear -- would have to come with the submission.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** With submission, we need assigned document, 424, did you say it was?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Yes.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** By the governor, all right, good. The next question

**Question:** What is the difference between leveraging resources and matching funds? Where in the proposal are the leveraged resources presented in narrative or in the budget tables and budget narrative?

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Do you want me to read that one more time.

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Sure, that would be helpful.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. What is the difference between leveraging resources and matching funds? And then it continues: Where in the proposal in the leveraged resources -- sorry, where in the proposal are leverages resources presented in the narrative or in the budget tables and budget narrative?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Okay. Let me give you an answer and then we may need to follow up but wherever you intends to seek and use other resources, they should be described in your narrative, and that's the requirement.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** Okay. Good. Let's let that stand and again, we've got just a few minutes left, so if that party it wasn't submit something in clarifying form, they can and/or we can respond more detailed following today. Next question here, guys,

**Question:** Would you please clarify the statement that was made with regard to not focusing on individual sectors? That phrase submitted here in quotes. How do you talk about needs within a regional economy without discussing the various individual sectors within the region?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** Okay. Well, I guess that comes back to me. I probably--

You did it.

Got it. We expect a discussion of sectors within the regional economy, but we do not expect a regional economic strategy to deal exclusively with one sector.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** All right. I think that probably does clarify things. I think that's good. And I actually appreciate the answer but as much, appreciate the question since it got you the ability to make that clarification. Next question.

They keep rolling in. Cyberspace is crowded this afternoon. All right. The question reads.

**Question:** Does the fact that grant funds come from H1B fees limit in any way the occupation areas or industries which can be addressed by this initiative?

**Lance Grubb (Deputy Administrator, OFAM):** The short answer to that is no.

**Rick Maher (Moderator):** They don't, okay good. I have got to announce to you, gentlemen, that you have successfully crossed the Finish Line. We are out of questions with the exception for the benefit of both of you, Tom and Lance, I've got two in my notes we said we were going to reflect on, actually three, and I've got them here and I'll provide them to you so you can make sure make it to the DOL ETA website. And I want to want to thank you to all of you and all of you in the national office that got this session together.

I think it's quite meaningful. It's an important initiative. You've given a lot of good information to people today, now after thanking you today is to turn to our audience and make sure that you know how to connect to these leaders with any further you may have from today. As been indicated several times during our session we've given the contacts to the website here it is again we've given you contact information to the grants office, to the assistant secretary's office.

You can feel free to connect with any of these folks on your detailed questions or general questions with this initiative. I want to also say that this Webinar will be recorded, has been recorded, and will be archived on Workforce 1. So you may go to Workforce 1, probably within 24 hours of today and find under resources information materials and presentation slides from today as well as a recorded session under the multimedia information and self-pay learning sections of the website. We want to remind that knowledge flows both ways and we recognize it.

We would certainly be willing and thankful to have your ideas and your thoughts and content on Workforce 1 at all times. We're open to share your content with your peers. You may do so by hitting the suggest content feature on Workforce 1. We invite you to do that early and often following today. And then also to stay engaged with workforce 1 on this and other initiatives. It's a way of continuing to connect with your peers, finding live web events such as today and continuing to stay connected on the latest initiatives.

So with that, again, thanks to you all of our presenters and experts today, and, most importantly, thanks to you, all of the folks from around the country that connected to us virtually, we look forward to seeing you on future workforce events. Have a great afternoon. Good-bye.